

Section III. Taking Action: Presenting Data and Determining Goals and Priorities

A: Reporting and Taking Action

1. Reporting back to the group

a) Mapping the results

Soon after the Shoreline Survey, hold a meeting to recap what people have seen. Bring in your base map, which you prepared when creating your segment maps. Your base map could be an enlarged topographic map, or you could piece together sketch maps, or assessors' maps. As the surveyors report their findings, ask someone to color code the results. For example, red dots could indicate leaking pipes, orange dots could represent sewage; black dots could mean trash; green dots could represent habitat that should be protected. Your map becomes a tool for taking action, a yardstick to measure your successes as the problems are solved, and a comparison for future shoreline survey work. If you want to preserve your base map, you can use a mylar overlay for your results.

b) Reporting the results

Beginning upstream, for each segment, surveyors describe problems (leaking pipes, erosion, sedimentation, poor land stewardship, discolored water, sewage) and assets or resources (good habitat, access points, trails, potential land purchases) and determine the most important things they found which become the priority items. Flip charts (or large sheets of paper) are good tools for this work. As segment 1 is reported, someone writes the problems on one sheet, the assets on a second and priorities on the third. Both seeing and hearing the material helps the group gain a holistic picture of the river system. Using these flip charts, make a Priority Chart for easy reference. (For a sample Priority Chart, see *Figure 12*.)

2. Determining the action plan

At a second follow up meeting, create your action plan from the priority items on your Priority Chart. Again using flip charts, work with the group to determine (1) which items need to be reported to town boards; (2) what items make good short term projects that benefits and raises awareness about the river; and (3) what the group sees as its goals for long term action. If scheduling permits and you feel it would be helpful, the Adopt-A-Stream coordinator can help facilitate this meeting. Summarize the decisions made at this meeting by making an Action Matrix. (See *Figure 13*.) These meetings are usually lively and interesting. Volunteers like knowing their work is leading to action. In a brief time period--three or four meetings and the survey itself - you will have done field work and community consensus building. These components are the beginnings of an action plan for your stream.

It is important to invite members of town boards - the Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen, Board of Health - to come to this meeting and help with the consensus building. Board members are interested in learning about the results of the survey; few towns have staff or volunteer members with time to survey streams. In addition, they often help with action items. For example, a member of the Board of Selectmen can easily talk with the DPW, which it supervises; the Conservation Commission can look into certain problems within 100 feet of a stream; the Board of Health may be able to test water quality to learn if a pipe is contributing coliform to the stream. Many groups find instant action this way. Furthermore, when you are ready to present your formal report to a board, you have a working relationship with at least one member who has briefed the rest of the board.

3. Creating a Time Frame

The final planning stage is the creating of a time line. This gives your group an opportunity to determine when to implement the action suggestions. There are two pages to this time frame. The first determines how, by whom, beginning date and target date. The second chronicles your successes. A list of successes is important for press releases, for grant writing, and for improving moral when your group feels overworked. It is a way to reward the volunteer efforts of individuals by listing their work on the success chart. (See *Figure 14 A and B*.)

4. Publishing your data and working with town boards and state agencies

From the summary sheets and your data sheets, the Steering Committee can put together a Shoreline Survey Report which you can name "Status of the _____ River, Based on the Shoreline Survey of 1995". You will want to include copies of the maps in the report as well as a narrative description of the segments and the data sheets. Try to include photographs. The report should be dated and contain the names of the volunteer surveyors, and a description of the methodology used. (See *Figure 15* for an outline of a Sample Shoreline Survey Report.)

5. Forming an Adopt-A-Stream group

If you are not already an official "Adopt-A-Stream" stream team, consider becoming one as you complete your Shoreline Survey. Riverways/Adopt-A-Stream is currently working with 140 groups across the state. Riverways/Adopt-A-Stream provides materials, workshops, networking, telephone assistance, and occasional site visits. Call the Riverways/Adopt-A-Stream Program at 617-626-1548.

Figure 12. SAMPLE PRIORITY CHART: Excerpts from Mother Brook Priority Chart

Problems found. See map for location. Reporters and general description of segment.	Natural Resources found	Priority work
<p>Segment X: <u>Mother Brook Condominiums to Hyde Park</u> Team Leader: _____</p> <p>1) refrigerators, tires and car parts at DPW site 2) pipes on bank 3) car parts, rotting old stored trucks on car company land 4) constantly flowing pipe; water flows over car parts: oily sheen noticed 5) dumping & evidence of backhoe work 6) 18" pipe with milky white discharge (paint or sandblasting residue?)</p>	<p>1) wetlands and a grassy meadow at housing project 2) potential for terrific public access 3) marsh has great potential</p>	<p>1) The 24" pipe 2) Litter and trash 3) Find out from DEP which businesses have NPDES permits</p>
<p>Segment X: <u>Washington St. to Maverick St - Cemetery Side</u> Team Leader: _____</p> <p>1) no trees, erosion, dirt over fence on the bank 2) cemetery fill from grave sites was pushed directly on to unstable bank slope. 3) trash: old refrigerators, tires</p>	<p>1) possible access from cemetery 2) possible trail</p>	<p>1) trash and fill on banks. 2) potential trails</p>
<p>Segment X: <u>Bussey Street to Mill Lane</u> Team Leader: _____</p> <p>1) trash on both sides of brook 2) logs, road construction sites, 55 gallon drums, old steel desk 3) brownish-gooey material 4) Condon Park: fill and trash (concrete blocks, old bikes, pipes, old motor parts) 5) inlet near Con Gas which gives off a rotten egg smell; degraded with petroleum products and runoff from dumpster containing hot water heaters, 6) duck feeding area</p>	<p>1) residential side of river cleaner 2) duck feeding area is attractive (but is it a source of coliform?)</p>	<p>1) culvert and inlet at Con Gas 2) trickle of sewage coming out of a 2" pipe just before the bridge</p>

B: Writing the Action Plan

Using priorities found during survey, the Stream Team Action Planning meeting decides three general types of action:

- I. Immediate Action: Reporting Problems to Officials
From its priority findings, members create a list of problems that must be reported. These could be direct health hazards such as a leaking sewage or problems solved through a simple repair such as a broken construction silt fence.
- II. Short Term Projects
Projects that can be completed in 3-6 months would be considered Short-Term. Completion of the Shoreline Survey Report, organizing a cleanup or steps towards a longer range goal would be projects to get the group started and moving towards their mission.
- III. Long Range Planning and Action
These activities can be the glue that holds a group together. They are the major issues on which a group chooses to focus. A longer range project might be a Greenway Trail, biomonitoring, or new fishway construction. These sorts of projects will require more extensive organizing, training potentially grant funding or working with multiple partners.

Most work is based under categories of what the stream needs to be healthy; these include:

1. Water Quality: pollution prevention, monitoring, remediation
2. Habitat: includes Land Protection, wildlife
3. Recreation: boat access, fishing
4. Outreach and Education: landowner education, building a constituency, cleanups
5. Water Quantity: town and resident water use, controlled flows from dams.

Once actions have been prioritized, they can be categorized by subject and put into an Action Plan. An example structure is listed below.

ACTION PLAN

Mission: <i>The Stream Team should come up with a mission statement and goals.</i>
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- I. Topic: ex. **Water Quality:** Improve water quality through monitoring, working to find point and non point sources of pollution.

Immediate Reporting:

- 1) Pipe off to RT XY running in dry weather. Bad odor and milky white color.
- 2)

Longer Range Projects

- 1) Set up and maintain regular water testing.
- 2)

- II. **Outreach:** Work to raise awareness in the community about the brook as a resource and build a larger town constituency.

Short-term Projects

- 1)
- 2)

Long Range Projects

Etc.

Figure 13. Action Plan: Taking each priority item, members of the Mother Brook Coalition agreed on Action steps to take. Parts of the plan are included here. (Based on the Mother Brook Coalition Action Plan.)

Water Quality

Immediate Action/Reporting

- 1) To DEP and Conservation Commission
 - a. outflow pipe: running over car parts
 - b. Serious pipe problem noted (note: this problem has been resolved by Strike Force)
 - c. Major concern about inlet near Condon Park
- 2) To Board of Selectman and Conservation Commission
 - a. transfer station debris in brook (note: forwarded to boards, still requires monitoring)
 - b. fill and trash on bank of cemetery (note: forwarded to boards, still requires monitoring)

Short-term Projects:

- 1) Look at erosion and see if BMP's could be installed. (CC, NRCS, others)

Long Range Projects:

- 1) Continue water quality monitoring and reporting. Include Hyde Park High School classes and adults. Add organics if possible.

Education & Outreach

Short-term Projects:

- 1) Sponsor clean ups on Mother Brook to raise awareness about brook & remove trash. Consider National Guard for refrigerators & heavy items. Coordinate with the Dedham Civic Pride Committee for a fall clean up & Hyde Brook groups. Sites needing particular attention include those reported to boards for water quality concerns at the transfer station and cemetery.

Long Range Projects

- 1) Raise public awareness of the brook, stewardship through public education, cleanups, poster contests. Organize riparian landowners watchdog group.
- 2) Create a Report from Shoreline Survey & present to town, state agencies and civic organizations.
- 3) Sponsor an event or events that would bring Hyde Park and Dedham awareness of Mother Brook.
- 4) Expand membership in Hyde Park and Dedham. Involve whole watershed.
- 5) Combine Historical Commissions in Hyde Park and Dedham and write history of Mother Brook.

Greenways and Trails

Short-term Projects

- 1) Work on a trail/greenways section as first pilot. Suggestions:
 - create a graded trail and Bussey Street to Mother Brook Condominiums in Dedham to include a footbridge and two picnic areas (see appendix);
 - create an education area behind Avery School: trail from playground to brook cleared by Middle School and High School students.

Long Range Projects:

- 1) Create long term stewardship group.
 - create Greenway, with access and trails. Do section by section. This was felt to be the most important single thing. Work would lead to;
 - greenway, a valuable resource protected;
 - consciousness raising leading to protection for Mother Brook;
 - increased town involvement;
 - funding and grants.

Figure 14 A. Action Planning Time Frame (Excerpted from Mother Brook Coalition Action Plan)

Action	Who	How	Beginning Date	Target End Date
Shoreline Survey Completed	Civic groups & residents from Dedham & Hyde Park	Adopt-A-Stream Shoreline Survey protocols	November, 1994	December 1994
Report problems to Town Boards and DEP	Group	Invited town officials to priority setting and action planning meetings; attended Technical Assistance Group Meeting.	December, 1994	May, 1995
Form Coalition & elect officers:	Group	Consensus at general meeting	January-February, 1995	February, 1995
Join Adopt-A-Stream Program	Group & Riverways staff,	Certificate at Mother Brook Day	April, 1995	April, 1995
Create brochure	Subcommittee headed by Bob	Create brochure, get funding, etc.	April, 1995	June, 1995
Work on Greenway Section/costing out section	Subcommittee headed by Mary Bush Brown	NRCS estimated costs for section around	April, 1995	May 1995, costing out June 1996, complete step 1
Celebrate Mother Brook with events	Work with Civic Associations, and neighborhood groups	Cosponsor events and/or support and advertise events	March 1995	Ongoing
Sponsor Clean ups	Work with Civic Associations, towns in Dedham & Hyde Park	Through BNAF and NepRWA	Spring, fall 1994 Dedham Civic Pride; Spring, 1995, Hugh O'Brien Youth Project	Annual fall event
Continue Water Quality Monitoring	Subcommittee comprised of Dedham High School Science classes	Continue program	1980	Ongoing
Expand Water Quality Monitoring into Hyde Park High School	Subcommittee comprised of Hyde Park residents	Work with school officials and teachers	April, 1995	Water quality monitoring in Hyde Park will begin 9/95. BNAF will assist. Ongoing
Expand membership into Hyde Park and Dedham	Group	Invite groups & individuals to join	January, 1995	Ongoing
Work on identifying pipes on Mother Brook	Subcommittee from Dedham High School	Dedham High School Students trained by MA GIS to identify pipes using GPS.	April, 1995. GPS Data on Hyde Park collected.	June 6, 1995
Conduct inventory of Wildlife and habitat	To be determined (TBD)	TBD	TBD	TBD

Figure 14B: GROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS (Excerpted from Mother Brook Action Plan)

When groups compile a list of their accomplishments, they find it amazing to see how much they have done. It is also an effective way to communicate about their work. This chart can be reformatted for brochures, town officials, newsletters, press releases and grant applications.

As a result of the work together on the Shoreline Survey in November 1994, the individuals and groups decided to form a coalition, which they named the Mother Brook Coalition. Their list of activities during their first six months includes:

Data Collecting:

- 12/94 **Shoreline Surveys** - completed Shoreline surveys
- 6/95 **Pipes** - students mapped all pipes with GIS after receiving training by MA GIS
- 7/96 **Student Monitoring Program** - group plans to expand the excellent Water Quality Program underway at Dedham High School to schools in Hyde Park.

Reporting:

- 1/95 **Town Officials** - group invited town officials to attend reporting and action planning sessions; officials gave suggestions for remediation
- 2/95 **Technical Advisory Group (TAG)** group presented results of the Survey and action plan to the Neponset TAG at a meeting sponsored by NepRWA. TAG members include representatives from EOEA, EPA, NRCS, Boston Water and Sewer Commission, Polaroid Corporation, Hollingsworth and Vose who advised the group on next steps.

Greenway:

- 1/95 **Planning** - group decides to implement Greenway Plan previously created by Mary Bush Brown
- 2/95 **Planning** - first part of Dedham Greenway costed out by Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS; formerly called SCS).
- 4/95 **Clearing** - Avery Trail: students cleared trail behind elementary school
- 5/95 **Planning** - group presented plan for linear trail at Condon Park to Dedham Conservation Commission; group began compiling Notice of Intent
- 5/95 **Planning** - group met with Boston Natural Areas Fund, the Trust for Public Land and the City of Boston's Environmental department to create a park on a vacant lot on Reservation Road along Mother Brook
- 6/95 **Planning** - group met with NRCS staff to flag the proposed trail for Condon Park Days.
- 6/95 **Planning** - group met with Dedham Parks and Recreation Commission who will attempt to fund specific items when needed

Remediation, prevention and restoration:

- 2/95 **Transfer Station** - as a result of the Reporting Follow up session, a selectmen met with Dedham Transfer Station representatives. Together they created an *Environmental Transfer Zone* between the transfer station and the brook that was to be litter free.
- 4/95 **Pipes** - company corrected all legal responsibilities for pollution observed by Shoreline Survey and resolved Strike Force Investigation (fine \$250,000). Company joined the Mother Brook Coalition.

Public Education and constituency building:

- 3/95 **Public Relations** - the group created a large banner, a logo, and brochures.
- 5/95 **Corridor protection** - the group informed citizens about its plans on Cable TV Show
- 5/95 **Information booth** - Mother Brook booth at Condon Park Field Days; raised \$130 from new members during the day
- 6/95 **Clean ups** - Hugh O'Brien students/Mother Brook Coalition and NepRWA.
- 6/96 **Display** - Display at Eastern Mountain Sports: video, plans for greenway and brochures

Organization:

- 2/95 **Officers** - elected at general meeting
- 3/95 **Fundraising** - The group received \$700 from Coalition members including the Company that had violations.
- 4/95 **Recognition** - Adopt-A-Stream award, Certificate from Representative Scaccia, EOEA recognition award to Dedham High School

C: Writing the Report

Writing the report is an important step in the Shoreline Survey process. The report should start with a map of your survey area and an executive summary. Include names of all participants and acknowledge help from town boards or other groups. You will also want to include your section narratives, priority sheets and Action Plan. The Action Plan an important section of the report because it will show other groups and individuals what needs to be done on your stream. You should also include photos and other site maps or sketches as well as sample data sheets. Include copies of newspaper articles or other press in an appendix.

a) Working within the town

The Shoreline Survey Report can be presented to town boards (with the press present) and can be filed in the town library. At the time of the presentation, include an oral presentation. Arrange a meeting with the Board of Selectmen, the Conservation Commission, and, where indicated, the Board of Health and the Department of Public Works. You may also want to meet with civic groups and neighborhood groups. Some groups have made graphics that include the base map, photographs and descriptions. (For an example, see *Figure 16*.) Other groups have held meetings with slide shows or presentations or combined both with a pot luck supper.

b) Working on a watershed-wide protection strategy

It is important to share a copy of your subwatershed Shoreline Survey Report with the larger watershed association and/or EOEa Watershed Team. Once a number of Adopt-A-Stream Teams have completed Shoreline Surveys, Shoreline Survey Reports and Action Plans, they will constitute a major part of a watershed-wide protection plan.

In addition, copies of the report will be useful to state agencies that are active in your watershed. The Riverways/Adopt-A-Stream Programs, DFWELE (Suite 400, 251 Causeway Street, Boston, MA 02114), and Office of Watershed Management, DEP (40 Institute Road, North Grafton, MA 01536) are two state agencies that would appreciate copies of your report. DEP is collecting data for its watershed-based work. In watersheds where MDC is active, they will want a copy of your report. Executive summaries would be welcome at your Regional Planning Agency, Massachusetts Watershed Coalition and at the regional Conservation District Office.

Figure 15. SAMPLE SHORELINE SURVEY REPORT – TABLE OF CONTENTS

"Report of _____ Brook, based on Shoreline Survey, October, 1994"

Table of Contents

I. Part I: Summary

A. Executive Summary: a descriptive summary of the Shoreline Survey findings.

1. Group description: name and description of group conducting the Shoreline Survey
2. Description of process used in Shoreline Survey: Organizing, training, priority setting, action planning and report
3. Description of findings: water quality, main problems, resources, state of the resources (protected, not protected), and potential areas which could be protected or opened up for recreational purposes.
- 4) Acknowledgements of help whether from town and state officials, landowners, businesses, cable TV, press, volunteers, etc.

B. Priority Chart summarized by segments

C. Action Chart describing both immediate and long range action

D. Accomplishments to date

II. Part II: Information by segments

A. Segment 1: headwaters from to

1. Narrative description (from summary data sheet)
2. Priority sheet could go here instead
3. Map
4. Selected photographs

B. Segment 2.....

III. Part III: Appendix with sample data sheets, copies of press (articles, press release)

Figure 16. SAMPLE POSTER FOR PRESENTATIONS TO TOWN BOARDS. (Bob Hartzel of the Mother Brook Coalition.) Map of a segment of the brook is shown with photographs and a description of the problem or asset.

